Walking Program

People being treated for cancer often experience fatigue, weakness and anxiety. Prolonged bedrest or sitting can lead to an increase in these symptoms.

A walking program is a good way to decrease cancer-related fatigue.

What are the benefits of a walking program?
- Less fatigue, more energy
- Increased endurance for activities at home and in the community
- Stronger muscles
- Improved flexibility of stiff joints
- Improved appetite
- More positive outlook, less anxious

How long should you walk?

The key is to start slowly and build up gradually. This is especially good advice if you have not been walking for exercise on a regular basis or if you have been very ill. Start with five or ten minutes and add two minutes each week until you are up to a half-hour or more each day if tolerated. This may be variable, though, from one person to the next. Keep in mind you should be able to carry on a conversation with someone as you are walking for exercise. If you cannot, you are walking too fast and will need to slow down a little.

Components of a Walking Program:

1. **Warm Up**: Walk slowly for a few minutes. This will help your heart, lungs, muscles and joints get ready for exercise.

2. **Peak Activity**: Walk a little more quickly now, but do not get too short breath. You should still be able to easily carry on a conversation with someone during this phase of the program. Pace yourself carefully and enjoy!

3. **Cool Down**: Walk slowly again for a few minutes until your breathing returns to normal. Your body needs this time to cool down so you do not become stiff and sore.

Please Note:
Your physician must clear you before beginning any exercise program. This program is not a substitute for medical care.
Walking Tips

- Shoes need to be comfortable. Make sure they are shock-absorbent and have a skid-proof sole. Jogging / running shoes are good choices.

- Pumping your arms as you walk will increase the intensity of the walking.

- Walking outside in nice weather can help you restore your mental energy.

- When walking outside the home, be sure to carry identification and include emergency telephone numbers (family members to contact, your physician) and current medications.

- Be sure to pace yourself carefully. Do not walk so far that you will have a difficult time getting home again.

- Walking at an enclosed mall is a good idea because it is climate-controlled. You will be with other people and have a safe place to rest.

- Walking at home on a treadmill is also a good option for exercise. You can make it more enjoyable by listening to your favorite music or watching your favorite TV program at the same time.

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